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DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SECOND MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 10 October 1978, at 3 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. VELLODI

(India)

- Election of Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur (continued)
- Statement by the Chairman

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The meeting was called to order at 4.20 p.m.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMEN AND RAPPORTEUR (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: Members will recall that it was impossible at yesterday's meeting to proceed to the election of the other officers of the Committee because consultations were under way within certain regional groups for the purpose of nominating the groups' candidates. At the end of yesterday's meeting I appealed to those groups to conclude the consultations as soon as possible, but in any case before today's meeting.

I am happy to report that the consultations have been concluded, and we have now been informed of the following nominations by the five regional groups for the vice-chairmanships of the Disarmament Commission: African States, Ghana and Madagascar; Asian States, Cyprus; Eastern European States, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia; Latin American States, Mexico; Western European and Other States, Austria and Denmark.

In view of the fact that there appears to be general agreement within the regional groups, may I take it that the Disarmament Commission wishes to elect the foregoing countries to the eight vice-chairmanships of the Commission without a vote?

It was so decided.

Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Ghana, Madagascar, Mexico and Yugoslavia were elected to the vice-chairmanships of the Disarmament Commission.

The CHAIRMAN: We come now to the election of the Rapporteur of the Disarmament Commission. Are there any nominations for that office?

Mr. FONSEKA (Sri Lanka): I should like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, on your unanimous election yesterday.

The Disarmament Commission must still elect one other officer, and it is my pleasant task today to submit the nomination of Mr. José Maria Otegui of Argentina for the office of Rapporteur of the Commission.

(Mr. Fonseka, Sri Lanka)

My delegation is aware that we hardly need to recall the significant role that Argentina has played over a long period in the advancement of the efforts of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. I have in mind the deliberations of the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and, most recently, the special session of the Assembly devoted to disarmament. Indeed, it was the untiring efforts of Argentina, in the person of Ambassador Ortiz de Rozas, that made possible the success of the special session on disarmament.

Mr. Otegui, whose candidature I am proposing, has been on his country's delegation to the last four sessions of the General Assembly; he has served on the First Committee. I can personally speak of his active involvement in the work of the special session on disarmament. His association with disarmament has been both intense and wide-ranging. He served as his country's representative on the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, in 1974; the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, between 1974 and 1978; the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference, from 1974 to 1978; the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, in 1975 and 1976; the Preparatory Committee of the Special Session Devoted to Disarmament, which concluded its work recently; the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons on the Sea-bed and the Ocean Floor and the Subsoil Thereof, which took place in Geneva in 1976 and 1977; and, of course, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, in 1976 and 1977.

I recall all that only to illustrate Mr. Otegui's knowledge of and involvement in matters which will in one form or another come to the attention of this Commission.

I would add that Mr. Otegui's candidature has the endorsement of the Latin American Group. Members will note that only one of the vice-chairmanships has been filled by a Latin American country. It would follow that the office of Rapporteur should be filled by a representative from Latin America.

My delegation is confident that Mr. Otegui's nomination as Rapporteur of this Commission will be accepted.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Sri Lanka for the congratulations he addressed to me.

Mr. José Maria Otegui of Argentina has been nominated as Rapporteur of the Disarmament Commission. Since that is the only nomination, I take it that it is the wish of the Commission to elect him by acclamation.

Mr. Otegui (Argentina) was elected Rapporteur of the Disarmament Commission by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to extend my personal congratulations to Mr. Otegui. I had the pleasure of working with him and getting to know him during the special session of the Assembly devoted to disarmament. I believe that the Commission has made a very good choice in electing him its Rapporteur. I look forward to working with him here.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: With regard to the next item on our agenda, organization of work, I should like to propose for the Commission's consideration and approval that an opportunity should be given to the officers of the Commission to have an exchange of views before we begin our discussion of that item. There have already been certain informal consultations. Of course, all members of the Commission will have an opportunity to express their views when we take up this item formally. I do, however, think that it would be useful for me to have an opportunity to exchange views with the other officers of the Commission so that we may place some suggestions before the Commission tomorrow.

Since there appears to be no objection, I shall adjourn this meeting now in order that the officers of the Commission may have consultations. The next meeting of the Disarmament Commission, to take up the item on the organization of work, will be held at 10.30 a.m. tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.